

Section 2. Code of Conduct. The VTAA values integrity and professional conduct, and in all interactions, we aim to respectfully hold each other accountable to these values. Being part of this organization is a privilege, not a right. Recognizing that acting with respect is fundamental to our strength as an organization, and that understanding ethics and professional conduct is paramount to that respect, this document specifically outlines behavioral expectations for our members, the procedure utilized for managing complaints and determining actions, and the ability to regain membership privileges.

1. Behavior of Members: All members are expected to act according to the Code of Ethics found in our bylaws, emphasizing that all communications be respectful and civil, providing a welcoming and safe place for members to have productive and professional debate. There is no place for rudeness, hostility, intimidation, bullying, sarcasm, sexism, homophobia, racism, or any other form of oppressive behavior. Should any member feel that another member has violated any of the above, and after seeking resolution directly with the individual remains unsatisfied, they may raise their concern to the board of directors. If a member feels unsafe addressing the individual directly, they may approach any member of the board for support.

2. Complaint Process: Complaints may be made to any member of the board, and the option to retain confidentiality always exists. If you have concerns with the board itself, you can ask someone you trust to initiate a complaint in your stead, whether or not that person is a member of the VTAA. All complaints must be in writing with detailed information regarding the offense, including date, place, description of events, and any witnesses when applicable. For email / text, please forward the original conversation thread noting the specific area of concern. Once a single complaint against a member is received, action will be taken in the following steps:

1. The board will review the complaint at their next meeting, or within 30 calendar days, whichever comes sooner. If there are multiple complaints against the same member, the individual complaints shall be viewed as a whole picture; this may receive an increased disciplinary response (see Disciplinary Actions below).
2. The board members will determine if there is reasonable cause of violation. In the case where a board member is also a complainant, that board member must recuse themselves from this discussion. If a complaint is made against a board member, that board member will recuse themselves from the investigation and any voting
3. The board will invite the member whose actions are in question to respond to the accusations in writing (email is acceptable), with 14 calendar days allowed for such response.
4. The board will review the response within 14 calendar days. If after evaluation of all documents 3 different people (none of whom is a complainant) feel that the actions violate either the Code of Ethics or Code of Conduct, the board will send a written

warning stating clearly that evidence of such behavior occurring again within the next 12 months will result in disciplinary action.

4. Disciplinary Actions: If there is a second occurrence within 12 months, the member in violation could be, without written warning:

1. able to receive messages but prevented from posting to the list-serve for a period of one year, and/or
 2. suspended from the VTAA group email list for a period of one year, and/or
 3. dismissed from board or committee work for a period of one year, and/or
 4. banned from attending the next annual meeting, and/or
 5. suspended from the practitioner listing on the VTAA website for a period of one year, and/or
 6. permanently expelled from the VTAA if the actions are most severe, without any refund of dues or other fees paid to date.
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2. Appeal Process: The member to whom disciplinary action has been warned or enacted is allowed to appeal the decision of the board within 30 calendar days of the notice. Any appeal must be in writing (email is acceptable) to a member of the board. Appeals shall be reviewed by all available members of the board and the committee on Ethics, Conduct, and Inclusion (excluding only those that are complainants) within 30 days. Final decision to support or revise the warning or action must be made by majority vote of these members.
 3. Regaining Membership Privileges: The member to whom disciplinary action is warned or enacted shall be able to regain full membership status and all benefits through reparative justice means. This may include taking responsibility for behavior and acknowledging the impact it has had on others, and a demonstration of a willingness to change behavior patterns. Reparations, progress and restitution will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and will be evaluated by the committee on Ethics, Conduct, and Inclusion excluding those that are complainants. In the case that the Ethics, Conduct and Inclusion committee is defunct, the VTAA Board of Directors will fulfill this obligation.